# THE MODIFICATION OF ADJECTIVES IN GREEK BY MEANS OF PREFIXES

BY

THOMAS OZRO MACADOO
B.A., Roanoke College, 1943
M.A., University of Illinois, 1947

AN ABSTRACT OF A THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN CLASSICAL PHILOLOGY IN THE GRADUATE COLLEGE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS, 1952

URBANA, ILLINOIS

# THE MODIFICATION OF ADJECTIVES IN GREEK BY MEANS OF PREFIXES

BY

THOMAS OZRO MACADOO
B.A., Roanoke College, 1943
M.A., University of Illinois, 1947

AN ABSTRACT OF A THESIS
SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN
CLASSICAL PHILOLOGY IN THE GRADUATE COLLEGE
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS, 1952

URBANA, ILLINOIS

## SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY OF MODERN STUDIES USEFUL IN THE INVESTIGATION OF PREFIXES AND COMPARISONS.

Forster, Hans, *Zur Geschicte der griechischen Komposita vom Typus* epichrysos: Zürich 1950.

Gardika, G., *"Hai Prostheseis en Synthesei:"* Athêna, vol. 24 (1912).

von Garnier, Katharine, *Die Präposition als sinnverstärkendes Präfix im Rigveda, in den homerischen Gedichten und in den Lustspielen des Plautus und Terenz.* (Heidelberg Diss.): Leipzig 1906.

Sapir, Edward, "Grading: A Study in Semantics," *Philosophy of Science 11* (1944): 93-116. Reprinted by David Mandelbaum in *Selected Writings of Edward Sapir in Language, Culture, and Personality:* Berkeley 1951.

Schwyzer, Eduard, *Griechische Grammatik* (I, p. 434 ff.): München 1939.

Strömberg, Reinhold, "Greek Prefix Studies," *Götesburgs Högskolas Årsskrift,* vol. LII: Götesburg 1946. (Abbreviated: GPS.)

R. UNIV. BIBLIOTHEEK LEIDEN

This investigation was undertaken to determine whether or not there could be made a new generalization summarizing the functions of prefixes as modifiers of primary adjectives, that is, adjectives which were always adjectives or of which any verbal or nominal force had been lost before compounding took place. Excluded from the inquiry were Bahuvrîhis (adjective compounds composed of a prefix and nominal stem, the prefix describing the substantive member as being in some manner possessed by or located in the subject modified by the compound, e.g. *hyphaimos* "with blood under the surface"), hypostases (compounds composed of a prefix and nominal stem, the prefix, locating the subject modified by the compound in reference to the substantive member of the compound, e.g. *epidêmos* "among the people"), and all verbal adjective compounds. It was not assumed that all nominalia and verbalia were necessarily unrelated in usage to the pure adjectives, but rather that their inclusion would tend to overextend and confuse the inquiry.

Two main lines of approach to the study of prefixes have been used in the past. The earlier investigators assumed that developed usages derived their force originally from the adverbial or local use of the (prepositional) prefixes and that the prefixes acted directly on the adjective stem. Thus they concluded that some prefixes, e.g. *ex-*, had an intensive force, and that others, e.g. *hypo-*, were detractive. This view remained largely unchallenged until 1946, when Reinhold Strömberg suggested that the compounds might retain senses of the prefix which had been lost from case-constructions.[1] Strömberg retained the assumption that the prefix acted directly on the adjective stem; he undertook to discover its real effect by ascertaining the exact meaning of the compound.

The results obtained from the use of these two procedures were inconsistent and in some cases contradictory. Thus in the case of compounds of *erythros* used by Hippocrates to describe urine in various diseased states the proponents of the older view would have translated *exerythros* as meaning "intensively red" and *hyperythros* as meaning "of a degraded red" or "pink." Strömberg, while agreeing as to the meaning of the latter, regards *exerythros* also as meaning "of a degraded red;" his reasoning is based on the observation that diseased urine is not, in fact, of a pure red. He postulated, therefore, a pejorative function for the prefix *ex-*.

There are several difficulties in this solution. In the first place it seems to give to the prefixes *ex-* and *hypo-* precisely similar functions. This, of course, would be possible theoretically but it would leave unaccounted for not only the fact that compounds of both prefixes with "red" are found describing the color

[1]Reinhold Strömberg, "Greek Prefix Studies;" *Götesburgs Högskolas Årsskrift,* vol. LII: Götesburg 1946. (Abbreviated herein: GPS.)

of urine in different stages of disease but also the fact that Galen (*Comm. in Hipp. Prorrh. LIX:* XVI.640.5K; *CMG* V.9.2.74) specifically states that the urines described by the two compounds indicate completely different prognoses.

In the second place, there would seem to be in this methodology an implication that the term "red" is to be considered as of absolute value, a value as precise and unvarying as that which a physicist might give it by identifying it in terms of light vibrations. The fact is, of course, that in Greek as in English the term can properly be applied over a very wide range of colors. If, however, such an adjective were conceived of as absolute, there would be no question as to the general effect not only of prefixes but also of all other modifiers. All grading of absolute values must necessarily be toward the less than absolute.

A third difficulty arises from the fact that some diseased urines can be described by compounds of *leukos* "white." If the effect of the prefix *ex-* is pejorative, as Strömberg says, there would seem to be no particular difference in signification between *exerythros* and *ekleukos.* The former he describes (GPS p. 67) as a "dirty weakened red colour approaching white or yellow;" the latter (GPS p. 60) is a "dull dirty whitish colour." Are these essentially different from each other?

Finally, Strömberg was forced to concede an itensifying function of *ex-* in some passages (GPS p. 68). His attempt to write this off as a late development must fail; he finds the "weakening" *ex-* in Theophrastus, and the "strengthening" *ex-* in Aristotle. The usages must have coexisted.

In the older view the variability of the value of adjectives was taken for granted and the various prefixes were seen as raising or lowering that value. While this solution avoids the difficulties incident to Strömberg's view, it raises another question. What is the difference between the function of prefixes and the function of comparative suffixes and comparative adverbs as modifiers? For example, what is the difference between *ekleukos* and *leukotatos?* Between *hypoleukos* and *hêtton leukos?* If there is none, how account for their coexistence?

In the present investigation it was decided first that the important problem was that of description of the developed usage of the compounds not that of unravelling their origins, and second that examination should be directed not to the meanings of the component parts of the compounds nor to the actual qualities described by them, but to the contexts in which they appeared.

Since the proposed method involved the comparison of minimum differences between the contexts studied, it was necessary to place limitations on the area of Greek literature to be studied. Scientific writers were chosen because there is in their writings little likelihood that a word was chosen for rhetorical or quasi-

poetical effect. The botanical works of Theophrastus (the *Historia Plantarum* and the *De Causis Plantarum*) proved to be ideal for the purpose, since the author was patently striving at all times for maximum accuracy of expression.

Since comparison was to be made not only between contexts in which compound adjectives were used but also where uses of the simple adjective or of comparative or superlative suffixes or adverbial modifiers occurred, it was necessary finally to limit the exhaustive investigation to one stem and its modifications. For this purpose *erythros* was chosen. Each occurrence of this word was listed (with the obvious exception of instances where it appeared as part of a proper name, etc.), along with the subject to which it was applied and the constant (if any) with which the subject was compared. This material was then arranged according to the subjects; e.g., all instances where *erythros* or its modifications were used to describe the color of flowers were grouped together.

This material was supplemented with selected occurrences of *erythros* in other scientific writers, e. g. Aretaeus, Aristotle, Galen, and Hippocrates, and to this material were added modifications of other simplicia, e.g. *leukos, pikros,* etc.

Examination of this material after it was organized according to the scheme explained above made it apparent that the use of prefixes, like the use of comparative and superlative suffixes and many of the adverbial modifiers, effects a type of comparison. It was, therefore, necessary to turn the attention to the whole problem of comparison, or grading.

Comparisons, or grading judgements, involve basically the practice by which a subject's value (quantitative or qualitative) is said to be more than (or less than) a constant the value of which is known. If subject and constant are of the same category in other respects than that of the quality being compared, the comparison is *internal.* E.g., in the statement "This apple is redder than that one," the two apples are in the same category as being apples, not only as being red. If the subject and constant are not thus of the same category, the comparison is *external.* E.g., in the statement, "This apple is redder than blood," the apple and the blood are in the same category only as regards their redness. With external comparisons we are not concerned.

Where internal comparisons were effected by means of comparative or superlative suffixes one very interesting phenomenon was noted: in every case the quality described appeared to be a "normal" or "expected" characteristic of the entire class within which comparison took place. Thus, in English, when one apple is described as redder than another, or as reddest of several, no surprise is occasioned. Redness is an accepted characteristic of apples.

Quite different were the comparisons effected by prefixes. Over and over the quality described by the compound proved to be "abnormal," "unexpected," or "surprising" in the subject to which the compound was applied. Thus *exerythros* and *hyperythros* describe (normally green) foliage or (normally yellow) urine. It was possible also to establish that compounds with *hypo-* describe only slight deviations from the norm, whereas those with *ex-* describe very pronounced deviations, since the former is sometimes associated with such adverbs as *epieikôs* and the latter with such adverbs as *sphodra.*

The effect of these prefixes, then, is comparable to the probable effect of the English suffix *-ish.* Thus in English an apple of a very light color might be called not pink, but whitish, whereas "reddish" would not be used to describe a (normally red) apple at all.

There are a few instances, however, when the compound seems to be a quasi-Bahuvrîhi—in these cases it is impossible to determine whether the stem is to be regarded as an adjective or as a noun. It has not been established definitely whether the compound in these cases still signifies a deviation from the normal. It is not unlikely that all of these compounds were developed by analogy to the Bahuvrîhis.

The following rules summarize the functions of the prefixes studied in this investigation, that is, *hypo-, ex-,* and *epi-.* They may quite possibly cover all uses of prefixes as modifiers of adjectives.

1. The prefix describes the quality of the adjective as a deviation from an expected norm or "constant" and indicates the degree of the deviation. E.g.: *exerythros* "very reddish" describes the color of a leaf (usually green).

2. The prefix locates the quality of the adjective as possessed by the subject modified. This type of compound is designated by the term "quasi-Bahuvrîhi." E.g.: *enerythron* "having redness within" describes an inflamed eyeball.

3. The prefix is added by reason of attraction to a nearby Bahuvrîhi. E.g.: *hypochlôros kai hyphaimos* "greenish with a bloody undertone." (In this case, however, the possibility that *hypochlôros* should be considered under Rule 1 cannot be ruled out.)

| | RANGE OF NORMAL COLORATION | |
|---|---|---|
| <--------< Increasingly | Red <---‖---> Decreasingly Red >--------> | Not Red |
| | S<br>ἐρυθρότατος<br>πάντων<br><br>S'C'<br>ἐρυθρότερος<br>τοῦ C<br><br>C<br>ἐρυθρός | |

| | | RANGE OF NORMAL COLORATION | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| <-----< Increasingly Red <-------< | | <-‖ Urine Color ‖--> | >-----> Increasingly White >---> | |
| S | S' | C | S' | S |
| (Pronounced deviation toward the red) | (Too red, but not very much so) | (not red or white) | (Too white, but not very much so) | (Pronounced deviation toward the white) |
| ἐξέρυθρον | ὑπέρυθρον | οὐρώδες | *ὑπόλευκον | ἔκλευκον |

The two diagrams above illustrate the difference between comparisons effected by means of suffixes and those effected by means of prefixes. In the upper figure three objects (e.g. apples) are compared. All are normally red, but they are of varying degrees of redness. The lower figure shows urine in states of health and disease. Both redness and whiteness are considered abnormal for (normally yellow) urine. In both figures S=Subject; C=Constant.

# VITA

Thomas Ozro MacAdoo was born on October 28, 1922, in Pulaski, Virginia. After graduating from Fork Union Military Academy in 1939, he entered Roanoke College and received the degree of Bachelor of Arts from that institution in February, 1943. In November, 1942, he enlisted in the reserve components of the Army of the United States; he was ordered to active duty in March, 1943, and served in the American and Asiatic-Pacific Theaters. Upon discharge from the Army in 1946, he entered the Graduate College of the University of Illinois. He held the position of Residence Hall Counselor from September, 1949, to June, 1950, and from September, 1951, to February, 1952. From September, 1950, to March, 1951, he held a Teaching Assistantship at The Ohio State University.

THE STONE PRINTING & MANUFACTURING CO.
BALTIMORE, MD.
STONE
U.S.A.